



Your reference: N/A
Our reference: FOI_25_0190
E-mail: FOI
@gloucestershire.police.uk
Direct dial: 01452 754304
Postal Address: As above
Date: 14/03/2025

Dear

Gloucestershire Constabulary Freedom of Information request FOI_25_0190

On 13/02/2025 you sent an email constituting a request under the Freedom of Information Act asking the following:

[...]

1. How many reported crimes have there been in your force area between 31 January 2024 and 31 January 2025 of the following offences since they were introduced under the Online Safety Act on 31 January 2024?

1. Sending false Communications
2. Sending Threatening Communications
3. Sending or Showing Flashing Images Electronically (Cyber-flashing)
4. Encouraging or Assisting Serious Self-Harm
5. Sending Photograph or Film of Genitals
6. Sharing or Threatening to Share an Intimate Photograph or Film

2. Please provide any information relating to which social media/online platform the offences occurred, i.e. Facebook, X, TikTok, Instagram, Whatsapp, online gaming - i.e. Roblox

3. How many arrests in your force area have been made between 31 January 2024 and 31 January 2025 on suspicion of the following charges since the new offences were introduced under the Online Safety Act on 31 January 2024?

1. Sending false Communications
2. Sending Threatening Communications
3. Sending or Showing Flashing Images Electronically (Cyber-flashing)
4. Encouraging or Assisting Serious Self-Harm
5. Sending Photograph or Film of Genitals
6. Sharing or Threatening to Share an Intimate Photograph or Film

4. For any arrests can you please provide the ages of those arrested for each offence?

5. Please also provide any information relating to which social media/online platform the offences occurred, i.e. Facebook, X, TikTok, Instagram, Whatsapp, online gaming - i.e. Roblox

6. How many charges have been brought by the force for the following new offences since they were introduced under the Online Safety Act on 31 January 2024?

1. Sending false Communications
2. Sending Threatening Communications
3. Sending or Showing Flashing Images Electronically (Cyber-flashing)
4. Encouraging or Assisting Serious Self-Harm
5. Sending etc Photograph or Film of Genitals
6. Sharing or Threatening to Share an Intimate Photograph or Film

7. For any charges can you please provide the ages of those charged for each offence?

8. Please also provide any information relating to which social media/online platform the offences occurred, i.e. Facebook, X, TikTok, Instagram, Whatsapp, online gaming - i.e. Roblox

If any part of my request is unclear or would exceed the time limit specified by the act, please contact me in line with your Section 16 duty to advise and assist requesters so that I may shorten or modify my request.

Clarification was sought on 21/02/2025 with the following:

Please are you able to provide a list of specific social media platforms you require a search for.

A response to the clarification was received on 26/02/2025 with the following:

I had assumed you would search on the basis of the charge rather than the social media platform. I merely require the information of which social media platforms were involved where there was an arrest or charge.

If that is not possible, the main platforms would be:

Facebook
X
Tik Tok
Instagram
Telegram
Snapchat
Roblox
Fortnite
Minecraft

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 s1, I can confirm that Gloucestershire Constabulary may hold some relevant information.

The primary function of the Constabulary's Arrest Recording System is to assist the Constabulary in adhering to Code C of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act. As such, its reporting function is limited. The system does not record detentions under specific

offences under the Home Office Crime Recording Rules; instead it uses Reason for Arrest (RFA) Categories. Unfortunately there is no single RFA Category for the offence(s) you have stated above. Although it's possible to follow an arrest through to a recorded crime and the police outcome per individual, it's not possible to retrieve electronic statistics. Therefore in order to ascertain if any relevant arrest information is recorded, a manual review of 221 crime records would be required. This would clearly take far longer than the 18 hours prescribed by Section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act.

Please see below for suggestions on how you may be able to refine your request to come within the cost constraints of Section 12 of the Act.

Section 17(5) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 requires Gloucestershire Constabulary, when refusing to provide information (because the information is exempt) to provide you the applicant with a notice which: (a) states the fact, (b) specifies the exemption in question and (c) states (if not otherwise apparent) why the exemption applies.

In relation to your request Section 12 applies.

Section 12(1) – Fee Regulations states:

Section 1(1) of the Act does not oblige a public authority to comply with a request for information if the authority estimates that the cost of complying with the request would exceed the appropriate limit. (As detailed in the Data Protection and Freedom of Information Fees Regulations of 2004)

The appropriate limit at the moment is £450 calculated at an hourly rate of £25 per hour for all staff time incurred in:

- i. Determining whether information is held
- ii. Locating it
- iii. Retrieving it
- iv. Extracting the information to be disclosed from the other information.

In accordance with the Act, this letter represents a Refusal Notice for your request.

Section 16 – Duty to Assist

By a way of assistance, if you were to resubmit your request, omitting the question in relation to the arrests a search of the Crime Recording System can be conducted for the offences you have listed and a freetext search of the MO's can be conducted for the social media platforms which were provided in the clarification, however, if you would like a broader search of the freetext please also include the terms of 'Social Media' and 'Online platforms' as well as the specific platforms provided.

If this would assist, please resubmit a new FOI request.

If you are not satisfied with this response or any actions taken in dealing with your request, you have the right to ask that we review your case under our internal procedure. Please note that a request for an internal review must be made within 20 working days of the response to your original request.

If you decide to request that such a review is undertaken and following this process you are still unsatisfied, you then have the right to direct your complaint to the Information

Commissioner for consideration.

The Information Commissioner can be contacted via the following means:

Website - <https://ico.org.uk/>

Call their helpline - 0303 123 1113

Email - casework@ico.org.uk

Post –

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

Yours sincerely,

Disclosure Officer
Gloucestershire Constabulary